

REMARKS

Applicant has amended claims 12, 13, 15, 16, 25, and 26 and cancelled claim 18 without prejudice or disclaimer. Support for the amendments may be found in the specification, for example, at paragraphs [0056]-[0057] and Figs. 1 and 2. No new matter has been added by this amendment.

Applicant respectfully traverses the 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) rejection of claims 12-26 over U.S. Patent No. 7,128,198 to Yoshida ("Yoshida"). The Examiner contends that *Yoshida* discloses "a tandem pressing line of plural presses (102, 103) see (Figs. 17,20)." (Office Action at 2.) The Examiner further contends that *Yoshida* discloses:

[a] main member (113) [that] is slidably held by a guiding member (111). The guiding member is fixed to the uprights by housing (151).

(Office Action at 3.) Applicant respectfully disagrees.

Yoshida discloses at col. 20, line 37-41, and Figs. 17-18 a workpiece conveyor 150 used in a tandem press line 101A which is supported by one beam 111. Each end of the beam 111 is secured to a U-shaped support frame 151 attached to the undersides of the upper frames 105. *Yoshida* further discloses at col. 21, line 1-2 that "no workpiece conveyor 150 is installed on the side of the inner side faces of the uprights 104." This embodiment of *Yoshida* includes conveyer 150 connected to upper frames 105, not to the uprights 104. *Yoshida*, therefore, does not disclose or suggest a "work conveying apparatus [that] includes a guiding member attached to at least one of a downstream upright of the upstream tandem press and an upstream upright of the downstream tandem press, an end of the guiding member extending substantially beyond the upstream upright of the downstream tandem press and the downstream

upright of the upstream tandem press parallel to a conveying direction of the work," as recited in claim 12.

In another embodiment, *Yoshida* discloses at col. 15, lines 35-56 a tandem press line 101 having a plurality of press machines 102, 103. As can be seen in Figs. 10 and 11, however, the beam 111 of this embodiment does not extend substantially beyond the uprights 104 to which it is connected in a direction parallel to the workflow. Beam 111 begins at the downstream upright 104 of press machine 102 and ends at the upstream upright of press machine 103, but does not extend beyond these uprights in either direction. *Yoshida*, again, does not disclose or suggest a "work conveying apparatus [that] includes a guiding member attached to at least one of a downstream upright of the upstream tandem press and an upstream upright of the downstream tandem press, an end of the guiding member extending substantially beyond the upstream upright of the downstream tandem press and the downstream upright of the upstream tandem press parallel to a conveying direction of the work," as recited in claim 12.

Because *Yoshida* fails to disclose at least the above claim features, independent claim 12 is not anticipated by *Yoshida*. Dependent claims 13-17 and 19-24 are allowable *Yoshida* at least because of their dependence from claim 12.

With respect to claim 25, *Yoshida* again fails to disclose "wherein the work conveying apparatus includes a guiding member attached to at least one of a downstream upright of the upstream tandem press and an upstream upright of the downstream tandem press, an end of the guiding member extending substantially beyond the upstream upright of the downstream tandem press and the downstream

upright of the upstream tandem press parallel to a conveying direction of the work," as recited in claim 25. Claim 25 is not anticipated by *Yoshida* at least for the same reasons as claim 12.

Independent claim 26 recites elements similar to those recited in claim 12, including "wherein the guiding member is attached to at least one of a downstream upright of the upstream tandem press and an upstream upright of the downstream tandem press, an end of the guiding member extending substantially beyond the upstream upright of the downstream tandem press and the downstream upright of the upstream tandem press parallel to a conveying direction of the work." This feature of claim 26 is not disclosed by *Yoshida*. Claim 26, therefore, is also not anticipated by *Yoshida*.

The tandem press apparatus recited, e.g., in claims 12, 25, and 26 results in a decreased carrying time of the work at least because the main member moves the shortest distance between the upstream tandem press and the downstream tandem press while being guided by the guiding member.

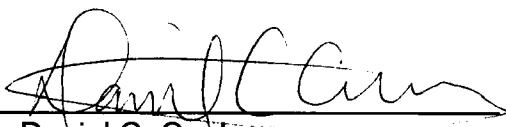
In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration of this application and allowance of the pending claims.

Please grant any extensions of time required to enter this response and charge any additional required fees to our deposit account 06-0916.

Respectfully submitted,

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